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20 February 1958

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CENTRAL

INTELLIGENCE

BULLETIN



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

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Indonesia: President Sukarno is being pressed by three major political parties to adopt a conciliatory attitude toward the rebel leaders. Thus far, however, he has given no indication that he will make any concessions.

Tunisian situation: While France and Tunisia have both accepted the offer of British and American good offices in their current dispute, there is a sense of growing impatience inside Tunisia. In Paris, Gaillard faces a threat that right-wing deputies may quit his coalition over the issue of Bizerte. This threat will probably cause Gaillard to go slow on making any concessions to Bourguiba.

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Sudan-Egypt: The Sudanese prime minister intends to declare a state of emergency and postpone parliamentary elections scheduled to begin 27 February if the dispute with Egypt over border areas has not calmed by that time. The prime minister has also asked the United States to provide quickly one or two transport aircraft for military use. [redacted]

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Spanish West Africa: The joint Spanish-French offensive against guerrilla elements in the western Sahara, reported to have begun on 10 February, is apparently still under way, but with few tangible results. The Moroccan foreign minister states that the military operation has greatly excited the populace in Agadir [redacted]

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III. THE WEST

French nuclear weapon: France is planning to start construction of a center for testing nuclear weapons at an oasis in southern Algeria. A French official revealed in November 1957 that an atomic bomb was being produced. It is estimated that it can be tested during the latter half of 1958. [redacted]

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DAILY BRIEF

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC
No Back-up Material.

II. ASIA-AFRICA

Sukarno Will Probably Pursue Firm Policy Toward
Indonesian Rebels

Although President Sukarno is under pressure from Indonesian political leaders and at least some military groups to avoid measures which could lead to civil war, he will probably persist in a firm policy toward the dissidents. The moves already taken by Army Chief of Staff General Nasution almost certainly have had Sukarno's approval.

Sukarno has told Djakarta political leaders he will neither set up a new anti-Communist cabinet nor reshuffle the present one to conciliate the Sumatran and North Celebes rebels, [redacted]

[redacted] Sukarno said that before he would even "think" about changes in the cabinet or national council, the Sumatran dissidents must submit to arrest. He has arranged to discuss the situation with former Vice President Hatta on 20 February, but there is little likelihood he will either restore Hatta to a responsible position or take his advice.

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The chief of Indonesian army intelligence told the American army attaché on 18 February that initial attempts to overthrow rebel leader Lt. Col. Hussein without using force had been unsuccessful. The intelligence chief believes Sukarno must act quickly and will not hesitate to order military action if necessary. The American army attaché comments that the chief determinant as to how soon military action can start is the problem of troop transport. [redacted]

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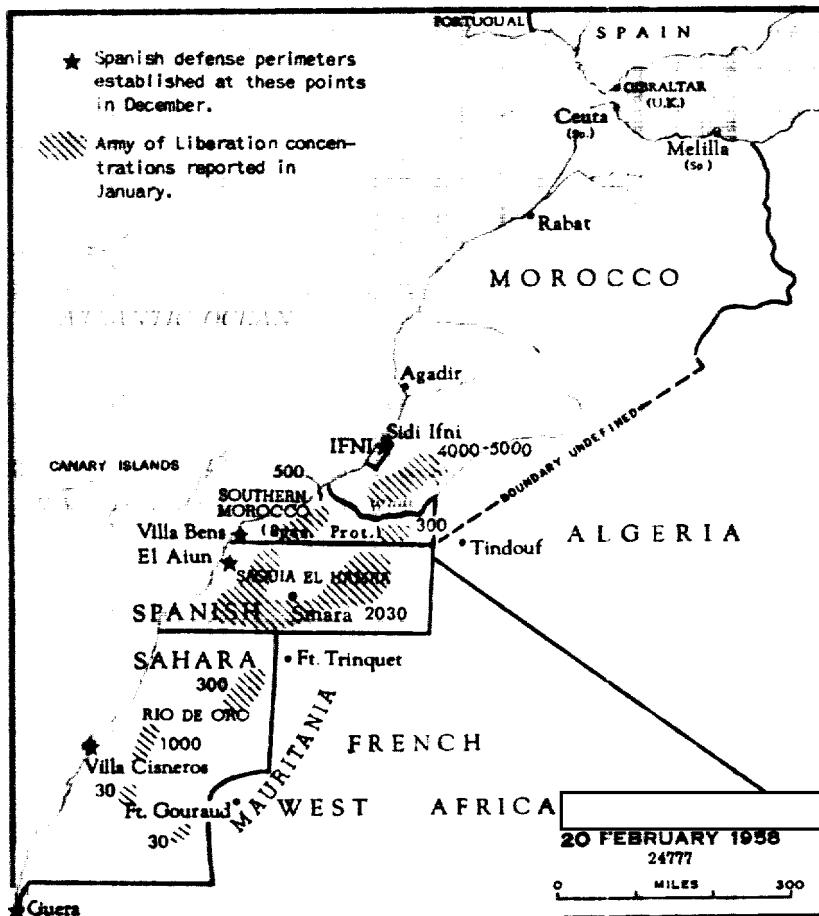
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The Situation in Spanish West Africa

Spain's military operation in Spanish West Africa, supported by French troops from Mauritania, does not appear to have achieved any tangible results against the irregular Moroccan Army of Liberation concentrations in the western Sahara. Contrary to earlier Spanish reports implying the launching last week of a sweeping joint operation designed to clear simultaneously the Ifni enclave and all of Spanish Sahara as well as northern French Mauritania, recent information indicates that Spain and France have been concentrating their efforts in Saguia el Hamra, and that only minor clashes have occurred in Ifni and Rio de Oro. They have thus far apparently taken no action in Spain's Southern Morocco protectorate, where both powers recognize Morocco's sovereignty. Spanish air and, to a limited extent, naval units are supporting the ground forces.

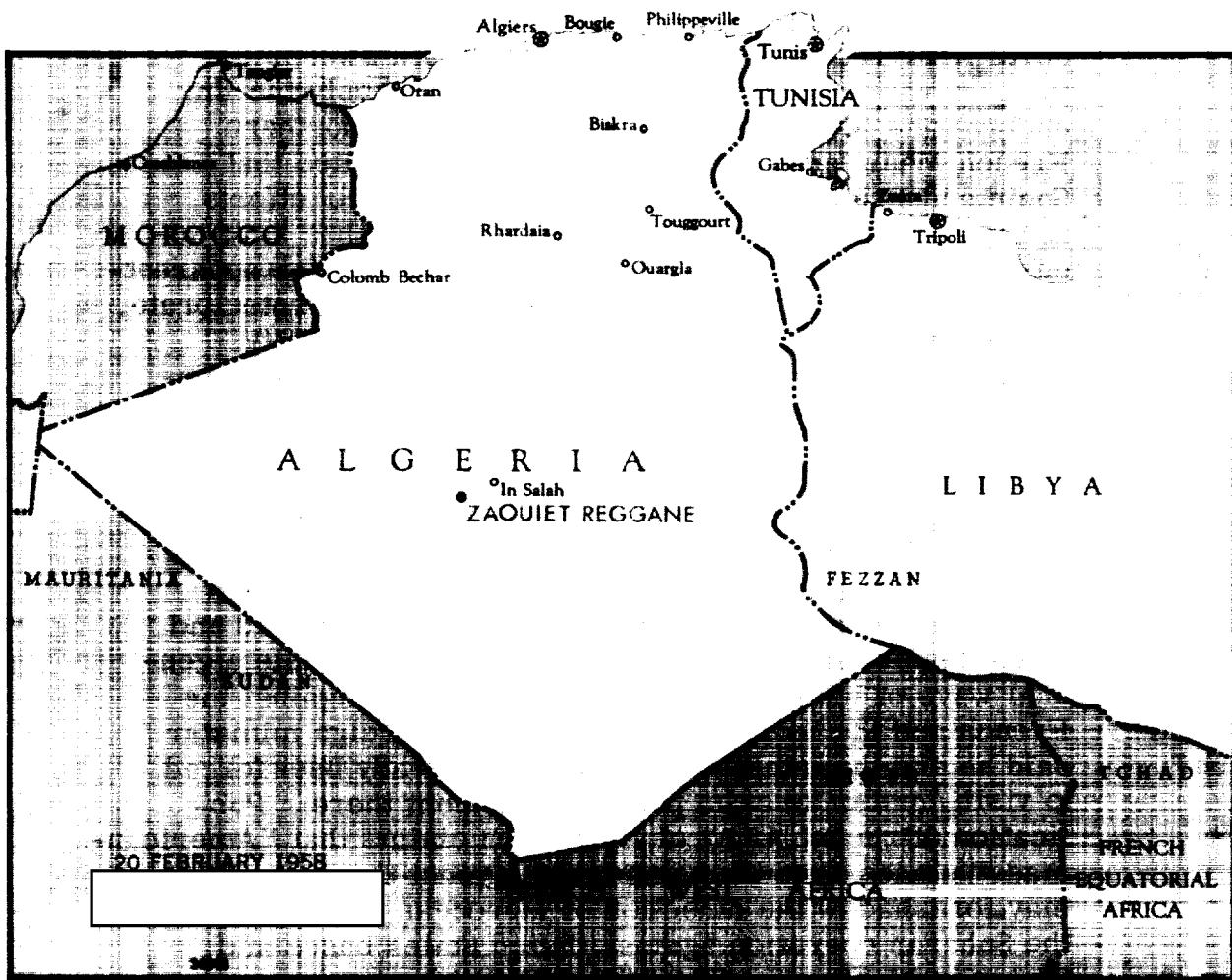
The Moroccan Government, fearful of public reaction, has apparently sought to curb local publicity. Since 15 February, however, the principal newspaper of the dominant Istiqlal party has been publishing its own version of recent events, and this reporting--biased and inflammatory in the past--will probably precipitate a general wave of indignation throughout Morocco against the French and the Spanish. The Moroccan foreign minister said he and the interior minister had already been forced to visit Agadir to calm public excitement there. Publication of recent Army of Liberation claims that "American-made" planes have been employed against the guerrillas may foreshadow the direction of Moroccan resentment over the Saharan operation against United States bases and forces in Morocco.

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III. THE WEST

France Preparing Test Center for Nuclear Weapons

France will soon begin building an "interservice test center" at Zaouiet Reggane in southern Algeria.

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Extreme temperatures during the summer may force suspension of construction so that the test center will not be ready until next fall. A French Atomic Energy Commission official admitted in November that France now is making an atomic bomb. It is estimated that it could be tested during the latter part of 1958.

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